



CITY COUNCIL

Public Safety Committee

**Monday, April 6, 2009
5:00 p.m.**

Attendance: D. Sterner, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, S. Marmarou

Other City Staff Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, C. Heminitz, B. Reinhart

Dennis Sterner, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m.

I. Setting Inspection Fee for Food Establishments

Ms. Katzenmoyer explained the need for a processing fee. She noted that this is a result of the work recently done regarding food vendors. She distributed the updated ordinance with the agenda memo from Ms. Butler. The Committee agreed that this fee is necessary.

Mr. Sterner requested that this ordinance be discussed at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

II. Satellite Dish Placement in HARB Districts

Ms. Katzenmoyer distributed the updated ordinance. She explained that this ordinance has been reviewed and approved by the FCC and HARB.

Mr. Marmarou questioned who would enforce the ordinance. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that it would be the Historic Preservation Officer.

Mr. Sterner questioned the penalty for not following this ordinance. Ms. Katzenmoyer noted that she would research this issue.

Mr. Sterner questioned how the ordinance would be enforced; would the enforcement officer look for satellite dishes or would they be investigated on a complaint basis. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that it would be at the discretion of the enforcement officer.

The Committee requested that the additional research be completed and that this appear on the next Committee of the Whole agenda.

III. Amending Chapter 11 Housing

Ms. Katzenmoyer noted that this ordinance cleans up some language and removes the requirement requesting proof of a trash hauler. Mr. Reinhart stated that this also adds the provision to issue rental permits pending an inspection. He stated that he, Mr. Denbowski, and Inspector Gery want proof of a trash hauler to remain in effect.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the process if a permit is issued and the property does not pass inspection. Mr. Reinhart stated that it would need to begin the process at the beginning and make all the necessary improvements. He also stated that the inspector would have the option of shutting the property down.

Mr. Marmarou noted his frustration with the work of Ms. Mayfield. He requested a meeting with Mayor McMahon, Mr. Younger, Mr. Hottenstein, Ms. Kelleher, Mr. Spencer, and himself. Ms. Heminitz will arrange this meeting.

The Committee requested that Ms. Katzenmoyer speak with Ms. Mayfield regarding the removal of requesting proof of a trash hauler. The Committee requested that this appear on the next Committee of the Whole agenda.

IV. Updates

- **Vacant Property Registration**

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Reinhart stated that Ms. Mayfield intends to have this ordinance ready for introduction on April 13. He stated that many property owners claim that properties are vacant. He stated that most 3rd Class cities now use this registration system. He stated that much staff time is spent on vacant properties.

Mr. Marmarou described a situation where a resident spends six months in Florida and six months in Reading. He questioned what would be done in this situation. Mr. Reinhart stated that he will be consistent and fair. He stated that property owners are claiming that their Reading properties are vacation homes but people are always there.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned how this is handled in vacation communities. Mr. Reinhart noted his belief that they are registered as rental properties.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned how staff would determine if a property is a vacation home. Mr. Reinhart noted a situation in which a doctor from New York claims a property is a vacation home but that people are always present.

Mr. Marmarou noted that another loophole is the property owner having relatives live in the property.

Mr. Reinhart again noted that he will be consistent and fair.

- **Codes Ticketing System**

Mr. Reinhart stated that Ms. Mayfield intends to have this ordinance ready for introduction on April 27. He noted that this is not a complex ordinance.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned what happens if these tickets are ignored. Mr. Reinhart stated that some systems use the Magisterial District Justice and others go directly to the Court of Common Pleas. He would prefer they go to the Court of Common Pleas. Ms. Mayfield is currently researching this process.

Mr. Reinhart further explained that he would be the first appeal. He stated that tickets will be mailed. Photos are part of the ticketing process and are posted on the City's computer system. He stated that in other cities, there are approximately 2 appeals out of every 100. He stated that other cities see a high rate of compliance and all funds are paid to the City rather than into the Court system.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted her belief that this ticketing system is important because of the immediacy of action.

The Public Safety Committee meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by
Shelly Katzenmoyer, Deputy City Clerk*